

VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."

BRANDON, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 1838.

VOL. X. NO. 27.

BY ORSON S. MURRAY.

TERMS.

The Vermont Telegraph is published weekly, at \$3.00 a year, payable within four months—after four months and within eight months—after eight months and within the year, and after the close of the year, to rise in this proportion.

To companies who receive twelve or more copies in one bundle, and pay within four months, \$1.50—after four months, to rise as above, \$1.75 within eight months.

Agents, who procure and pay for six subscribers, are entitled to the seventh copy gratis.

No paper is to be discontinued until arrears are paid, except at the discretion of the publisher.

All letters, to secure attention, must come postage paid.

Vermont Telegraph.

BRANDON, SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1838.

For the Vermont Telegraph.

SECOND CORNER OF CHURCH.

Brother Angier: In answer to your letter, published January 31, 1838, I would say: you admit that God has revealed time, and that these times are figurative. So far, I am pleased to agree with you, as it respects those passages which are quoted at the commencement of your letter. Then if I can show a Bible rule for understanding these figures, I have by your own concession proved my premises. This I think has been done in a former letter. I agree that God has in many cases revealed himself literally as well as figurative language. Time, in all its several denominations, is used in the scriptures to convey unto us the duration of important epochs or events; and when the time is specified by any number prefixed or added thereto, as three and a half, or seven, &c., it becomes definite, and then comes under the rule of years, days, &c., as in Rev. xii, 6 and 14. Then makes good sense, and harmonizes with all parts of the Bible. It is true that God has revealed himself in a great many places in his word, and in ages past, in literal years, days, &c., and in every case which I have examined they have been literally accomplished in the given time, except the case of Jonah. From this fact I get strong faith that God will accomplish all definite periods, although they may be revealed unto us in figures. Why God has revealed himself in figures, I cannot tell, neither is it for me to enquire? To be submissive to his will, and to try to understand his word, is my anxious desire. And whether I do, or do not understand it, I leave for the public to judge, and time will determine.

To follow you through all your windings and turnings, would require more time and patience than I have to spare. Let perhaps it would not be amiss to look some of your arguments on your 6th objection. After quoting Paul's words in a number of places, you say: "How could the Apostle consistently have used such language if he had known that the 'trump' would not sound for nearly 1800 years? Did he and his brethren expect to live so long? If not, how could he say, 'Then we which are alive, and remain'?" &c. And you might have added, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," &c. Now brother Angier, are you prepared to say that Paul, because of his ignorance of the time, told an untruth? For you well know that all those brethren who then lived have long since slept in death, and have not yet been changed, when Paul expressly told them according to your understanding of the text, that they should not all sleep? Can it be possible that the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write thus; or did Paul mean the whole family of God to the end of time? And if so, where is your argument?

I can see no way to avoid the conclusion of your argument, that the Holy Spirit did not do what Christ said he would do, "lead them into all truth," and that Paul wrote what in fact was not true, when he wrote, "we shall not all sleep," &c. Either you do not explain the word of God aright, or much, very much of that which you have brought as evidence against me, is not admissible evidence, from the very fact that it is not true. And if we admit that Paul was deceived, and the rest of the apostles, in this thing, why not in other things? Where then is the Christian's hope? I cannot, my dear brother, take you for a teacher, and believe my Bible. I believe that Paul, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, had in his mind's eye the whole family of the redeemed, and agrees with Christ, Math. xxiv, 34: "This generation (children of God) shall not pass, until all these things be fulfilled." Not one jot or tittle of his word shall fail. And yet you would make us believe that through the ignorance of the apostles, much was written, which no man can believe without denying his own senses. This, my brother, is your argument. That they, the apostles, did not know when Christ would come, and therefore "could with propriety convey an idea" that they should not all sleep, that is, die, when the truth is, they, the disciples, have all died. My argument is, there would be no propriety in Paul's telling an untruth, neither did he, but spoke with reference to the whole family of the children of God, that some of them would be alive at the coming of Christ, and that this would not in the least militate against Paul or the apostles knowing the time. Now let me bring out or two texts to show that the apostles

did know the time. Read 1 Thes. iv, 13 to the v, 5 verse: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." This certainly refers to Christ's coming, and if the saints will not or do not come near the time, I cannot conceive the propriety of Paul's making the distinction he has in this passage, between *they* and *ye*: for one will know as much as the other about that day coming upon them, as you have attempted to prove.

Again: 1 Peter i, 7-11: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what, (time) or what manner of time, the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it did testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

The sum and substance of Peter's information is this, that the prophets, by the spirit of Christ, did enquire, search, and find out, the time when Christ should be crucified, or suffer the just for the unjust, and the glory that should be revealed at his appearing, at the end of our faith, and salvation of our souls, when Christ comes the second time without sin, unto salvation. And proves to me beyond a possibility of a doubt, that the 70 weeks did exactly testify the time of Christ's death, and the 2300 days, the time of his glorious appearing. If this is not so, I must be in a great error, and as you say, black is white, and white is black, to me, and not only my optic nerves are strained, but my senses and reason are completely disorganized. And instead of your ridicule, or your arguments, I need your pity and prayers. Your next argument which I shall notice is, the one founded on the text, Math. xxiv, 36, and Mark xiii, 32, 33. "But of that day, and that hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." You say I understand this literally. I do so. And you further say, "I must confess this has always looked to me like trifling with divine things." How do you understand, my dear brother? Why, "that our Savior here uses lay and hour indefinitely." Then let us paraphrase it as you understand it. Indefinite day, or hour, is an unknown period of time, and a day may mean any length of time from an hour to ten thousand years, according to your definition, an hour may mean the same. "But of that period of time, and that period of time knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the period of time is." If this was Christ's meaning, why use day and hour too? Why this repetition? And why does Christ explain himself in the 35th verse, "at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning?" Are these indefinite periods? If so, why use the four times, when one might answer the whole purpose? Ah, my brother, you may jeer at my understanding of the Bible; but truth will stand, and the Bible will not contradict itself. It is the cause of God. Again, your question, "did the antediluvians know the year when the flood would come?" I answer no, because they would not believe. Yet they might have known the day for God revealed it unto Noah, see Gen. vii, 4 and 10. "So shall also the coming of the son of man be." As you say, out of your own mouth will God judge you. As it was then, God revealed the day, even so now God has revealed the prophetic day. And Christ uses the language, no man knoweth the day, &c., to show us that we are not to understand Daniel's 2300 days to be literal days. He then tells us to watch for his coming for we know not the day and hour, it has not been revealed by man, nor angels, nor the son of man; but the Father has kept this time in his own hand. Yet we must watch. How shall we watch? Peter has told us, "we have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." (hid, secret, cannot be interpreted,) "for the prophecy" (concerning "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.") "came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter i, 16-21. Therefore we are to watch, by the light of the "Lamp." For the wise, as Noah did, shall understand. "But ye brethren are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief, but ye are the children of the light." (Lamp.) Have faith in the word of God. "But there were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you," &c. I have thus far followed you, to try to convince you of some of your errors, as I think. I now leave you, my brother, in the hands of Him who knows our hearts. If truth is your object, God will reveal it unto you. I see by your last letter of February 8th, that your object is to play upon words, to deny

what you have manifestly said, as in the close of your third paragraph you say, "now it will be seen that I said nothing about restoring the captivity but the Temple or Jerusalem." Let us have what you did say. In your letter published Dec. 20, 1837, second column, beginning of the second paragraph, you say, "there were a number of decrees concerning the restoration of the Jews, and rebuilding of Jerusalem." I did not pretend to quote your words. Yet the words are the same sense; for all must acknowledge "the restoration of the Jews," at that time, was "restoring the captivity."—So I understood you, at the time, and so I understand that sentence to mean yet. This then must close my remarks to you. For I am fully convinced, no good can come of an altercation of this kind. God will take care of his own cause, and of me. A few days will disclose the truth. I remain, dear brother, yours, &c., WM. MILLER.

LETTER III.

To the Editor of the Vermont Telegraph.

Library Books.—Why are not the publications of the American S. S. Union more generally circulated in New-England?

That our publications are not extensively circulated in New-England, I know, partly from personal examination and inquiry, and partly from the testimony of others in whom I have implicit confidence. It may be safe to say, generally, that in a library of three hundred volumes, seventy-five to one hundred will be the books of the American S. S. Union; thirty to fifty books of denominational societies, and the residue from the miscellaneous stock of book-sellers. We publish from three hundred and fifty to four hundred library books, strictly speaking—and I make this statement thus indefinitely, to allow for differences of opinion as to what is properly a Sabbath-school library book. Now, why should not these three hundred and fifty or four hundred volumes be found in every evangelical Sabbath-school in New-England? Have they not as strong claims to a place there as any other books in the market? Are they not as cheap? as appropriate? as entertaining? as useful? as evangelical? Has any competent person or persons examined and compared them with other books of the same class, and pronounced them inferior in all or any of these respects? If so, who, when, and on what grounds? I am persuaded that no such verdict has been returned; no such examination and comparison have been made—and that no books are to be found in the language, of the same class, cheaper, more appropriate, more entertaining, more useful, or more evangelical. Why, then, are they not generally circulated in New-England, where, if any where, we may expect to find judgment and discrimination in the selection of the means of religious instruction? Is it because they are supplied elsewhere with as many as they need or can afford to purchase? By no means. So far from it, the universal complaint is that new books are not to be had in sufficient number to supply the cravings of Sabbath School children. And hence the necessity, we are told, of publishing everything that is written, and of buying everything that is published, though it be Pugh's Note Book, or Parley's Tales, or even Robinson Crusoe!

The gross abuses of the library system which have arisen from this and other causes, are fully exposed in the pamphlet on this subject, lately published, a copy of which I transmit for your examination. It is not to my purpose to examine them here, but simply to inquire, not why this and that book are admitted into your schools, but why it is, that of our three or four hundred volumes, only one-fifth, or at most one-quarter, are found in them? I have said that it is not because they are supplied with better books from other sources—for, after making all due allowances for local associations and preferences, it will be found that at least one-half of most Sabbath School Libraries in the country are made up of books for the sentiments of which not an individual in the school will hold himself responsible. A newspaper puff, or the general character of the publisher, or the recommendation of the book-seller, is usually a sufficient warrant for the introduction of the book, and when once introduced what probability is there that its errors or defects will be detected?

We present to your community at least four hundred bound volumes for the use of your Sabbath School children. Each one of them has been carefully examined, before its publication, by a committee composed of two Methodists, two Baptists, two Episcopalians, and two Presbyterians. They have decided concerning each and all that they are evangelical and appropriate—that they inculcate the important religious truths which these and other evangelical denominations hold in common, and which the Holy Spirit employs to lead sinners to Christ. These gentlemen I have known intimately for years; I know their standing in this community and in the churches with which they are connected, and I assure you that

they are men of integrity, and judgment, and elevated piety. They feel, as deeply as New-England Christians do, the necessity of impressing the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel upon the hearts and minds and consciences of children and youth. And by these doctrines I mean, the native depravity and corruption of the human heart, the necessity of repentance and regeneration by the Spirit of God, faith in Christ as the only Savior of lost men, and justification through faith in Him as the only ground of acceptance with God. Taking our publications as a whole, they embody more of these and kindred truths than any other publications of the same class and number to be found in our language. I do not say this inconsiderately, and I again ask, why should not these four hundred volumes form a part of every Sabbath School Library in New-England?

It has been said (not however so far as I can learn by any person who has examined them) that many of them are light and fictitious. We have asked those who make this objection, to put a finger on any one book to which it applies. A year or two since we received a very kind Christian letter from an intelligent lady in Vermont, lamenting that so many books made for children are of this objectionable character, and implying very strongly that we had contributed to the stock. She was told that we not only contributed nothing to the stock, but that we had done all we could to prevent the publication of such books, by disapproving them in manuscript when the opportunity was offered. They have however gone into the hands of booksellers, and thence, under a strong breeze from newspapers, they have passed into the Sabbath School Library, where they enjoy great popularity. I asked this good lady to name the book or books contained in our catalogue, which any intelligent Christian would pronounce light and fictitious, but I have had no answer.

Sometimes the very same breath which casts this undeserved reproach upon our books, has been employed to puff up other books, concerning which a distinguished clergyman of New-England lately said—"they are weak, puerile, and in some respects insufferably foolish. I am ashamed that New-England minds should issue such productions."

The views of the Society on this subject, have been expressed thousands of times in the strongest and fullest manner. We not only reject fictitious books, properly so called, but we reject whatever seems to be fictitious, unless we can accompany it with conclusive evidence that it is not so.

We are willing to submit the character of our books in this point, as well as every other, to any unprejudiced tribunal that will examine them, and I have no doubt the decision will be that, as a whole, a like collection of books cannot be found on either or both sides of the water, combining so much entertainment with so much interest, and so much truth with so little that is light and fictitious.

Some persons have supposed that all Sabbath School Libraries are furnished by us, and hence they have laid at our door the sins of all writers and publishers of books that are found in such libraries. We are prepared to answer for every book in our catalogue, which has the imprint of the Society upon its title-page. Beyond this we have no responsibility. If a book is to be found objectionable in any view, with our imprint on it, no greater favor can be shown us than to inform us of its title, and the nature of the objections. We believe however that no such book is to be found on our catalogue, and if not, why should not these four hundred volumes be a part of every Sunday School Library in New-England?

Yours, &c.,

FREDERICK A. PACKARD,
Ed. of the Pub. of A. S. S. Union.
Philadelphia, March 10, 1838.

For the Vermont Telegraph.

PEACE, NO.—XVIII.
WAR AND MISSIONS.

Few are fully aware how important is the prevalence of peace to the spread of Christianity. God in his infinite wisdom selected a time of profound peace through the Roman Empire for the advent of our Savior; and the history of his church would show, that war has in every age neutralized the efficiency of the gospel in Christian lands, and greatly retarded its progress through the world.

Burmah would furnish strong testimony to the latter part of this assertion. Most of our religious papers copying from the "Maulmein Chronicle" published at Maulmein in Burmah, have informed their readers of the civil war recently, if not still raging there, and of its baleful influence on missionary efforts in that empire. Prince Surrawa, brother to the King, raised the standard of revolt, and entrenched himself so strongly in a town about forty miles north of Ava as to throw open its gates, and challenge an attack from the royal forces. Meanwhile "the whole country appears to be in a state of disorder and commotion. Men are said to be marching from all quarters to join one or

the other army. The people, deprived of all authentic intelligence of what is taking place in the country, are harassed and alarmed by constant reports of the most contradictory nature. Trade is at a stand, and fears are entertained, that agriculture will be abandoned, unless matters be speedily settled." A graphic description of what is inseparable from war in any form. The first accounts stated, that Surrawa had got possession not only of Rangoon, but of the whole course of the Irrawaddy between Rangoon and the capital. All intercourse between the two places, and consequently with the missionaries at Ava, was cut off. Their condition, too, was likely to become perilous;—such a state of things, if continued, must have been very unfavorable to the labors of the missionaries generally; and the war, had it pervaded as it still may, the whole country for any considerable length of time, would have suspended, if it had not entirely broken up, all the missions there.

Most readers will recall the persecutions which many years ago befel the devoted Judson and his co-workers. But what drew upon them the wrath of Burmah? Not the gospel truth; not the character or crimes of the missionaries; nothing which they had done or proposed to do; but merely their supposed connection with the English whose armies were carrying fire and sword into the heart of Burmah. It was the war-system of Christendom, the dread and hatred of baptized warriors, that provoked Burman rulers to threaten vengeance upon peaceful missionaries whose religion had been so grossly belied by those misnamed followers of the Prince of Peace.

The world is full of facts on this point. A missionary in the South Sea Islands testified that war and rum—they generally go together—had in one case which fell under his own observation, destroyed in a single fortnight nearly all that the heralds of the cross had accomplished in twenty years! How came the devoted Lyman & Munson to fall such untimely victims to the knife of cannibals? The war-policy of Christendom, I verily believe, occasioned it. Not far from the spot where they were murdered, a whole village had been long before laid in ashes by a gang of our own countrymen sent thither by our government expressly for the purpose. That fact must have been known, as well as the general policy and character of Christian nations; and on seeing the missionaries in a Christian garb, those savages would naturally suspect them of bloody designs, and pant to take revenge.

Here is matter for serious reflection; and will not the friends of God lay it to heart, and inquire how far the war-system, still tolerated by Christians themselves, interferes with the great work of converting the nations to Christianity? Have they nothing to do in removing this obstacle to the world's conversion? Can the world be christianized before its removal? If not, must not the cause of peace be incorporated into the system of instrumentalities requisite for the world's entire and thorough conversion to God? And if this must be done sooner or later, how much longer shall it be delayed? Is it not high time for Christians of every name to take hold of this subject in earnest? Will not churches, and ministers, and the conductors of benevolent enterprises, turn their attention to it without delay?

SIRIS.

RELIGIOUS MISCELLANY.

PROSPERITY DANGEROUS.

That to the depraved heart of man it has ever been peculiarly difficult to endure the temptations incident to uncommon prosperity, no reflecting person will deny; and so long as a state of mind continues to exist in the church by which these temptations are invested with power, so long will it be true that she cannot endure prosperity, and yet remain incorrupt. Nor is this true alone of the church taken as a body. It is true of individuals in all stations, from the highest to the lowest. But on those who are called, in the providence of God, to occupy important stations in the church, these temptations operate with peculiar power. It was so even with Paul, and to prevent his fall and ruin, his heavenly Father deemed it indispensably necessary to send and to continue a thorn in the flesh, even after entreated by earnest and repeated prayer that it might be removed. And if such things were true even of the chief of the apostles, what shall be said of us, and of other men? Who will be confident that he can stand when even an apostle was in such danger of falling? And that the danger is real and great, any man's experience, who knows anything of his heart, must have taught him. How often has it been necessary for God to chastise him, and to bring him low to save him from ruin. And now, after all that God has done, and still continues to do, how few are found who can endure prosperity unhurt. How dangerous to young men is early prosperity, and to successful ministers or evangelists, that deference for them and their opinions, which is so natural, and the peculiar honor and influence enjoyed by them in the church; and how often in the midst of prosperous revivals is the Spirit of God grieved and quenched by the unholy elation, ingratitude and spiritual pride, which so naturally result from peculiar measures of success. Indeed, a liability to elation and ingratitude, has been, in all ages, the danger of the people of God.

It is a duty that God himself demands the church no longer to evade. And if suitable efforts are made, and the presence and aid of God implored, the work can now be done, and the church can be redeemed from a sin so odious, so degrading, so destructive. Her public sentiment may be made energetic and pure. To seek the approbation of God only, and to adore God alone—to be pure, meek and lowly in heart, may become the constant, habitual, and delightful state of mind throughout the church, and to loathe with horror, infinite the least defilement of pride. Then will prosperity, however great, have no power to corrupt. So intimate will be the communion of the church with God—so clear her views of eternal things—so deep her sense of the utter vanity of worldly distinction and human praise, that temptations such as few can now resist, will be stripped of all their power—the baseness, the pollution, and the ingratitude, the unnumbered evils of pride, will be so fully seen and deeply felt, that the whole soul of the church will be turned against it as with the energy of omnipotence.—Pres. Beecher.

So that the children of Israel, when about to enjoy a season of great prosperity in Canaan, even after a long series of wanderings in the desert, expressly designed to try and humble them and prepare them for prosperity, were yet deemed in greater danger from this than from any other source. How often was the warning repeated and urged upon them, "Beware lest thy heart be lifted up and thou forget the Lord thy God," and yet even those oft repeated warnings were all in vain, as their subsequent history showed, and as was often confessed in the lamentations of later prophets over the ruins of their people. So also has it been in the Christian church. When the fires of persecution have raged, and they have been driven from the honors and enjoyments of this world to God, the church has become humble. But so soon as this external pressure has been taken off, and the natural tendencies of the heart have had opportunity to operate unchecked, how soon has she forgotten God in the elation of pride, and through her wanderings from him become exceedingly corrupt. And even to this day the scourge of affliction has been found essential to make her humble and keep her from ruin.

Indeed, the greatness and extent of the dangers resulting from this source almost exceed belief, and cannot be too strongly stated. The sin of pride, is not in its nature open, and gross, and shocking to the common feelings of mankind, but is peculiarly plausible, deceptive, and fascinating. Nor are its evil effects at once manifest, like a species of mental intoxication, it steals over the soul, relaxes its moral energies, and plunges it into an ocean of unhalloved and de-basing indulgences.

And to be keenly alive to its approach, and to reject, with loathing and horror, the very first drop of its Circean cup, requires a moral energy which few possess. Yet such must be the spiritual vigor of the church, before she can endure the state of prosperity implied in the conversion of the world to God. For in this it is implied that the scourge of affliction is no longer to be employed, as a means of producing humility; but that her prosperity is to be like the wave of the sea. And if the church, with her present degree of holiness, is unable to endure even the small measure of prosperity which God sees fit to bestow, how could she endure the accumulated and unheard of prosperity of the day when the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High? This is, indeed, a subject demanding deep and serious thought; for the whole of the great question, Can the church be prepared to endure the conversion of the world to God? centers here. Can she have resources and honor, and wealth, and influence, and yet remain heavenly minded and lowly in heart? If she cannot, this world can never be converted to God. Prosperity will but be the ruin of the church. She will rise but to fall again, and never can she enjoy constant prosperity and the smiles of Heaven. Of course, the church needs a special preparation on this subject, and one adapted to the age in which we live, and to the prospects before us. No common degree of humility will suffice. A character must be formed of humility, so pure, deep, and strong, as to endure even the trial of millennial prosperity. And it can be done. For if pride can be excluded from heaven, and if the church can be prepared to endure eternal prosperity there, and yet remain pure and lowly in heart cannot the same results be produced by the presence of God, and by breathing the atmosphere of heaven, even on earth? It may be: it will be: for such is the promise of God.

It is a duty that God himself demands the church no longer to evade. And if suitable efforts are made, and the presence and aid of God implored, the work can now be done, and the church can be redeemed from a sin so odious, so degrading, so destructive. Her public sentiment may be made energetic and pure. To seek the approbation of God only, and to adore God alone—to be pure, meek and lowly in heart, may become the constant, habitual, and delightful state of mind throughout the church, and to loathe with horror, infinite the least defilement of pride. Then will prosperity, however great, have no power to corrupt. So intimate will be the communion of the church with God—so clear her views of eternal things—so deep her sense of the utter vanity of worldly distinction and human praise, that temptations such as few can now resist, will be stripped of all their power—the baseness, the pollution, and the ingratitude, the unnumbered evils of pride, will be so fully seen and deeply felt, that the whole soul of the church will be turned against it as with the energy of omnipotence.—Pres. Beecher.

THE DIGNITY OF INDIVIDUAL ACTION.—The sense of original personal responsibility ought to be preserved in all our connections with the associations of our fellow men. It is often the case, that the facilities which societies afford for more efficient individual action, are perverted, and made a plea for doing nothing. It is all left for the society to do. The society seems to be regarded as a sort of invisible agent, which is always operative, whatever may be the employment